

GOVERNMENT MUSEUM, MADRAS
EGMORE, MADRAS - 600 008.

NEWS LETTER

(JANUARY 1994 - JANUARY 1995)

A BIRD'S - EYE VIEW OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSEUMS

From January '94 - January '95.

The Madras Government Museum and its twelve District Museums have observed the Museum Week Celebrations during last year in January 1994 with packed educational programmes to focus the attention of the general public and students on the awareness, existence and usefulness of museums in Tamilnadu. Our Hon'ble Minister for Education and Culture, Prof.K.Ponnuswamy inaugurated the celebrations on 7th January 1994 in the Museum Theatre, Madras.

NOTABLE ADDITIONS:

The most notable additions to the collection at the Madras Museum are the acquisition of 57 copper plates (including two seals, belonging to Rajendra Chola period from Karanthai Tamil Sangam, Thattaiyur at a total cost of Rs.30 Lakhs, and also the new additions of 70 bronzes of 11th - 15th Centuries through the Treasure-Trove Act from Nagai-Quaide-Millet District. The other treasure trove acquisitions include 20 hoards of coins of different dynasties and a dozen hoard of jewellery items from various districts. A dozen portrait paintings of Thiru Lakshmi Ratan and ten neoliths from Kalrayon Hills were received as gifts from Mrs. Lakshmi Ratan, Kilpauk, Madras and Thiru K.Krishnamurthy, Cuddalore respectively.

Besides these antiquities, the natural science collections were strengthened with the addition of fresh specimens got from collection tours at Kanyakumari coastal areas, Ariyalur fossil bed and Salem hills by the respective Curators.

The cultural objects have been taken care of, as part of the museum activity. In the Chemical Conservation Laboratory, two paintings belonging to the Prince of Arcot, Madras, and a Tanjore panel painting belonging to Thiru Satyanarayana Sinha, Madras were repaired and restored. Conservation of bronzes and wood carvings were also taken up at Raj Bhavan, Madras.

DESIGNING AND DISPLAY IN GALLERIES:

Remodelling of showcases and redisplaying of objects in the Children's Museum, Geological and Zoological galleries at Madras were effected. Newly designed showcases were added up in the museums at Madurai, Kanyakumari and Krishnagiri. Renovation of anthropology and reptiles galleries in Pudukkottai and restructuring of sculpture gallery in Coimbatore were carried out. The Museums Department participated in the 8th World Tamil Conference by putting up its exhibition stall on Ancient Tamilagam during January 1995 at Thanjavur.

EXHIBITIONS AT MADRAS AND IN DISTRICT

The following special exhibitions were organised during the period:

1. Madras - "*World Heritage Day*" (with Archaeological Survey of India) - Archaeology Section.
2. Madras - "*Preservation of Biological Specimens*" - Zoology and Botany Sections.
3. Madras - "*Care of Museum Objects*" - Chemical Conservation Section.
4. Madras - "*Flora of Madras*" - Botany Section.
5. Madras - "*Paintings of Thiru Lakshmi Ratan*" - Art Section.
6. Madras - "*Coinex 94 Madras*" - Numismatic Section.
7. Pudukkottai - "*Jurassic Animals*".
8. Madurai - "*Bronzes*" Exhibition, "*Science*" Exhibition, Photographic Exhibition and "*Paintings of G.R. Rajan*".

9. Salem - "*Wonderful World of Birds*" at Kolli Hills.
10. Vellore - Science Exhibition at Siddhartha School, Museum Exhibition at Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur and Coins Exhibition.
11. Erode - Coins and Philatelic Exhibition in collaboration with Postal Department, Apex Club and Periyar District Historical and Cultural Centre.
12. Trichy - "*Collection - An Educative Hobby*".
13. Ooty - Participated in Asia Pacific Exhibition.
14. Cuddalore - Art Exhibition and Bronzes Exhibition.

COMPETITIONS IN MADRAS AND IN DISTRICTS:

The following competitions were held during the period:

1. Madras - *Annual Child Art Competition* - Education Section.
2. Pudukkottai - Singing, Essay Writing and Oratorical Competitions as part of Children's Day Celebration. Quiz for College students on the History of Pudukkottai.
3. Madurai - Quiz for Students.
4. Salem - On the spot painting competition and Art Competition.
5. Vellore - Art Competition with Vellore South Rotary Club.
6. Erode - Art Competition with Hindustan Pencil Company.
7. Cuddalore - Quiz and Child Art Competition.
8. Krishnagiri - Child Art Competition.

SPECIAL LECTURERS AT MADRAS AND IN DISTRICTS:

Madras

1. A special lecture on "*Indus Valley Civilization - new dimensions*" was delivered by Dr.R. Mathivanan, Director of Tamil Etymological Project, Madras on 4th August, 1994.

The Hon'ble Finance Minister Dr.V.R. Nedunchezian presided over the function. Thiru I.Mahadevan, I.A.S., (Retd.) gave the introductory remarks. A quiz competition was held later on this subject.

2. Prof.T. Balakrishnan Nayar Endowment Lectures (91-92) were delivered by Dr. Ashok K.Ghosh, Prof.of Anthropology, Calcutta University on 12th and 13th December 1994.
3. "*Conservation Psychology of Preservation of buildings*" by Dr.Christopher Andrews, U.K. in collaboration with the British Council Division and Institute of Architecture, Madras.
4. "*Current Museum Practices in the U.K.*" by Dr.V. Jeyaraj, Curator, Chemical Conservation Section.

Pudukkottai - *A Social view on the Rehabilitation of Prisoners* - Thiru P.M. Esra Mendolson. *Employment and Societies' Expectations* - Thiru P. Suresh Kumar.

Salem - "*Wonderful World of Snakes*" - Prof. A. Sannasinathan "*Museum - an Introduction*" and "*Archaeology*" - Thiru J.R.Asokan, Curator.

Trichy - "*Bharatidasan from Schelly*" - Prof. Ravindran. *Preservation of Historical Monuments* - Thiru Rajmohan, Curator, Government Museum, Trichy. "*New Approaches in Fire Fighting*" - Thiru Thiagarajan, D.F.O. "*Consumer Protection in the Literature*" - Prof. Pushpavanam. *Ootam Tharum Kozhikal* - Prof.Tmt.Susheela Appadurai.

Erode - "*Foreign Museums which I visited*" - Dr. V. Jeyaraj, Curator for Chemical Conservation. "*Chothidam in Literature*" - Thiru Kaliya Perumal.

Krishnagiri - "*Coins*" - Prof. K.A. Thirugnana Sambandam. "*Rock Art in Dharmapuri*" - Thiru P. Duraiswami, Teacher.

Vellore - "*Indus Valley Civilisation is Tamil Civilisation*"
Dr.R.Mathivanan.

Coimbatore - "*Kadar Tribes in Tamilnadu*" - Dr.C. Maheswaran, Curator, Ooty.

CULTURAL PROGRAMMES AT MADRAS AND IN DISTRICT:

Madras - N.S.S. Special Camp was conducted in collaboration with Madras University N.S.S. Cell from 11th to 20th February 1994. 150 students from six city colleges were given training in preserving our cultural heritage.

Kanyakumari - Museum Campus cleaning by N.S.S. Vivekananda College, Kanyakumari.

Erode - Leather puppet show in collaboration with Sakshi Tutorial Centre, Chithode.

TRAINING PROGRAMMES AT MADRAS AND IN DISTRICTS:

Madras

- i. The annual training programme on "*Care of Museum Objects*" - Chemical Conservation Section.
- ii. The annual refresher course on the "*Preservation of biological specimens*" - Zoology and Botany Sections.

- iii. Training in "*Preservation of biological specimens*" to the staff of Arignar Anna Zoological Park, Madras - Zoology Section.
- iv. Training on "*Conservation of Antiquities*" to a batch of History of Art students from Madurai Kamaraj University - Chemical Conservation Section.

CONFERENCES, SEMINARS ETC., ATTENDED:

The following staff of the Department of Museums participated in various Conferences, Seminars, etc.

1. **Dr.N. Devasahayam &** - Annual meeting of the Museum Association of India, Lucknow.
2. **Dr. V. Jeyaraj -**
 - a. National Seminar on Conservation, New Delhi.
 - b. Symposium in Career Guidance for Chemistry Graduates, Madras.
 - c. Training in Victoria and Albert Museum, London, U.K.
 - d. 8th International Tamil Conference Seminar, Tanjore, January, 1995.
3. **Thiru J.R. Asokan** - Workshop on Techniques of Diorama making, National Museum of Natural History, New Delhi.
4. **Tmt. M.N. Pushpa** - Sea Weeds and their uses - Seminar, Madras.
5. **Thiru J. Raja Mohammed -**
 - a. Annual Meeting of the Museum Association of India, Lucknow.
 - b. Eighth International Tamil Conference Seminar, January 1995, Tanjore.
6. **Thiru Sam Sathiaraj** - "Neem and other Medicinal Plants" - Workshop at Nagercoil.

FILM SHOWS, GUIDE SERVICES ETC.:

Educational film shows, library and reference facilities, gallery special talks and guided tours round the galleries were being continued at Madras and in District Museums.

MUSEUM'S PUBLICATIONS:

The following bulletins and guide books were reprinted and released to the public.

1. Descriptive catalogue of Butterflies in the collection of Madras Museum - **Dr. S.T. Satyamurti.**
2. Bronzes of South India - **Thiru P.R. Srinivasan.**
3. Flowering Plants of Madras City and Its Immediate Neighbourhood - **Thiru P.V. Mayuranathan**, revised by - **Dr.C. Livingstone and Dr. A.N. Henry.**
4. Guide to Anthropological Exhibits - **Thiru C.J. Jayadev.**
5. Guide to the Bronze Gallery - **Dr.V.N. Srinivasa Desikan.**
6. Catalogue of Vijayangar Coins in the Collection of Madras Museum - **Dr.N. Sankaranarayana.**
7. Exhibition Strategy for Contemporary Museums - **Prof.V.H. Bedekar** (New Publication).

RESEARCH PROJECTS:

The following staff have been awarded research projects/ fellowships in recognition of their research aptitude and merits.

- 1. **Dr.V. Jeyaraj**, Curator, Chemical Conservation, Madras Museum - U.K. Visiting Fellowship for three months (1993) under Nehru Trust.

- Small Study and Research Grant - "*A Technical Study of Coins of Arcot Nawabs*" (1995).
2. **Thiru M. Gandhi**, Curator, Vellore Museum - Small Study and Research Grant for "*Chola Temples in South Arcot District*" (1993).
 3. **Thiru J. Raja Mohammed** - Curator, Pudukkottai Museum - Small Study and Research Grant on "*Islamic Architecture*" (1994).

FORTHCOMING PROJECTS:

1. A new *Buddhist Centre* will be established in the Madras Museum Campus soon.
2. The Bronze Gallery at Madras Museum will be airconditioned during this year.
3. Madras Museum will be assisting in vocational course "*Museology and Archaeology*" in Madras Christian College under U.G.C. Programme.
4. The new district museums at Palani and Thanjavur will be established.

Thus, the Madras Museum is stepping into its 144th year of useful service to the public and the student community.

M. RAMU, I.A.S.
COMMISSIONER OF MUSEUMS i/c.

Dated: 07.03.1995.

MADRAS - 600 008.



DEPARTMENT OF MUSEUMS

.Government of Tamilnadu

**Museums at Madras, Pudukkottai, Salem, Madurai, Trichy,
Vellore, Erode, Ooty, Coimbatore, Cuddalore,
Kanniyakumari, Tirunelveli, Krishnagiri.**

Madras - Telephone : 8269638 (General)

Closed on Fridays and National Holidays.

Admission by Entrance Tickets at Madras & Kanniyakumari

Rs. 3 for adults, Rs.2 for children

Re.1 for bonafide students from Institutions.

Working hours 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

District Museums are

**Closed on Fridays, Second Saturdays and National
Holidays.**